United Nations A/58/627

General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 December 2003
English
Original: Spanish

Fifty-eighth session
Agenda item 117 and 156

Human rights questions

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 10 December 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that on 20 June 2003, Olga Salanueva Arango and Adriana Pérez Oconor, wives respectively of René González Sehwerert and Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, applied via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba to the United States authorities for visas so that they could travel to the United States of America to visit their husbands who are being held, unjustly, in United States prisons.

More than four months after they submitted the applications, despite numerous requests from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for an answer, the authorities at the United States Interests Section in Havana have officially reported that both women's application have again been denied.

With this further reprisal, the United States Government seeks to break the revolutionary spirit of our imprisoned comrades and their wives and adds to their punishment without any justification.

They are again being denied the right to travel to the United States to visit their husbands. Each time they have asked for permission to enter the United States the Government of that county has refused it, thereby flouting not only international law but also United States law. To justify their decision, the United States authorities have come up with the ridiculous argument that the wives pose a threat to the national security of the United States of America.

This decision of the United States authorities violates the United States international obligations as set forth, inter alia in the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from being subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the principles for the protection of all persons deprived of their liberty, the principles for the protection of all persons under any

03-65606 (E) 171203 191203

form of detention or imprisonment and the Standard Minimum rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

The conduct of the Government of the United States of America is not only clearly contrary to universally recognized international norms but is also a systematic and flagrant violation of the human rights of René González Sehwerert and Gerardo Hernández Nordelo and of their relatives.

This decision demonstrates how eager the United States authorities are to punish our heroic prisoners for their heroism and patriotism so as to please their buddies in southern Florida.

For over 40 years, successive United States administrations have organized and encouraged, or permitted the commission of numerous terrorist acts against Cuba; these acts have claimed nationals of other countries, including the United States, as victims. These actions have not ceased and those responsible for them act with total impunity. Some of them are strolling in the streets of Miami and speaking over the media, inciting others to commit such acts.

The Government of the United States, which proclaims itself the leader in the fight against international terrorism, which imprisons our compatriots precisely because they have penetrated the terrorist groups that operate freely against Cuba from United States territory with the protection of the authorities, as is explicitly recorded in official documents that Washington has declassified and as was repeated, furthermore, in the charges against the Cuban patriots at their trial; in the statements by the prosecutor, who argued that the issue of terrorism should not be considered at the trial; in the statements of the witnesses, who acknowledged their participation in such actions; and in the court's ruling where it is stated, in writing, that the terrorists enjoy the protection of, and are encouraged and protected by, the United States Government.

It is that same Government which, despite all the information that it has been given about those groups, has failed to take any steps to curb and put a stop to these actions.

It is the same Government that rejects Cuba's proposals to enter into agreements concerning cooperation in the fight against terrorism, drug trafficking and illegal emigration.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 117 and 156.

(*Signed*) Bruno Rodríguez **Parrilla**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative